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In the Specification:

Per Examiner's Request a complete markup of the Specification is below:

Title of the Invention: E-COMMERCE ROLE PLAYING PLATFORM

BACKGROUND of this invention

The E-Commerce Role Playing Platform finds its roots in the decades old game of Dungeons & Dragons TM. Based on this type of fantasy, multi-user game, WebMaster Tools, Inc. proposes to take this concept to the internet and add the ability to gain revenue from this genre of game play.

SUMMARY of this invention

The current invention is an E-Commerce Role Playing Platform is a fairly simple computer game format that is in the context of multi-user game play via the internet. E-Commerce Role Playing Platform revolves around two very important central components: 1) a fantasy game and 2) a player's "game account." The fantasy game will provide a forum for interactive, competitive game play. The "game account" will accept deposits, enable a player to make purchases for character building, allowing the player to accept winnings, & pay a player's opponent upon defeat.

OBJECTS AND ADVANTAGES

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Several objects and advantages of my invention are; a game that users can enter/ re-enter, can set up a "game account", with a deposit of funds, or can enter in beginner mode (for a timed period with no initial deposit), but gain funds from his/her opponents to build his/her "game account".

Additional objects and advantages are; a having PLATFORM that can be used to manage a users account, and a having PLATFORM that is designed to store the users game play tactics, a history of events, such as opponents, defeats, review game play for learning and enhancing skills.

The PLATFORM offers the user the opportunity to re-enter a game by logging-in to their existing account and resume play or joining/entering in a new game. The PLATFORM provides memory and storage, which allows the user to recall information.

Brief Description of Drawing Section:

Without restricting the full scope of this invention, the preferred form of this invention is illustrated in the following drawings:

FIG 1 shows the user connecting to and playing the game through the Internet.

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Detailed Description

The following description is demonstrative in nature and is not intended to limit the scope of the invention or its application of uses.

As shown in Figure 1, the current invention is an E-Commerce Role Playing Platform, a fairly simple computer game format played on a computer that is in the context of multi-user game play via the internet 500. E-Commerce Role Playing Platform revolves around two very important central components: 1) a fantasy game and 2) a player's "game account." The fantasy game will provide a forum for interactive, competitive game play. The "game account" will accept deposits, enable a player to make purchases for character building, allowing the player to accept winnings, & pay a player's opponent upon defeat.

The E-Commerce Role Playing Platform concept runs solely via the Internet 500. Like many other online, multi-user formats, it will operate through players being connected on a game server over the internet, with the licensing company serving as the game overseer and Game operating as a third party service & maintenance provider.

Technically, the specific fantasy game that a licensing company chooses to apply the E-Commerce Role Playing Platform to will be programmed sufficiently to accept a large number of users at various levels of game play, allowing them interactive competition between players. The licensing company will be responsible for the creation of the fantasy

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game, the server upon which their game will operate, and the correct application of the E-Commerce Role Playing format to their particular game.

The game 1 will provide both a generic "game account" that can be customized for the licensing company and a merchant account that accepts payment for "game account" deposits/pay-outs. It will also provide, inclusive with the licensing of the E-Commerce Role Playing Platform, a forum for a user to access his/her "game account", add additional fund to it, use it to purchase additional characteristics, view a transaction history for gains/losses and purchases/deposits made, & a format for cashing out the "game account." All of these features will be completely customizable for the licensing company to incorporate into their user-interface. The licensing company will include with a player's "game account" the ability to save a player's character in a password-protected account even after the player has cashed out and ended his/her game play. This will enable a player to re-enter his/her game at a later date, upon deposit of required funds into the "game account," and resume his/her game play at the level he/she exited the previous game.

In the preferred embodiment, the E-Commerce Role Playing Platform will require, upon initial entrance to the game, parental approval from players under the age of 18 yrs. old and accepting of the terms & licensing agreements of the E-Commerce Role Playing Platform and the company that licenses it. The game 1 may conduct random checks via phone, e-mail, and mail to verify age and consent.

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The game 1, may provide, via the "game account", a safety net for maximum amount of loss in a given time period, based on skill level, game level, & amount of funds in the "game account."

The object of this type of game play is to begin with a fantasy computer game, along the lines of a Dungeons & Dragons TM format, using a set dollar amount to enter the initial game play. Ultimately, using additional monetary contributions to a player's "game account," the player's goal is to beat out his opponents and win the money that is held in their "game accounts."

Operation:

~~Operation: The E-Commerce Role Playing Platform will be licensed to various companies who present fantasy game concepts to WebMaster Tools, Inc. for review. Once licensing is approved, the game will be designed or adjusted to fit the E-Commerce Role Playing Platform, and the platform will be tailored for the specific game.~~

User 10 game play actually starts with the creation of and an initial deposit of funds into a player's "game account." In the preferred embodiment, tThere is a beginner mode, that can scale into the various levels of game play, whichthat requires no initial deposit to the "game account" and a user 10 can simply access his/her "game account" for the gaining of funds from opponents.

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The initial deposit (via e-check, credit card, or internet dollars) will allow a player to a) activate a "game account" that will ultimately accept his/her winnings from other players and pay opponents that he/she loses against, b) choose a character, c) give his/her character a basic weapon for defense and battle, and d) the ability to buy additional lives, weapons, and added features as he/she continues in their game experience. The "game account" will be the basis of a player's entrance into the interactive, multi-user game play.

This is a major change over current art as a User 10 is using money.

The initial deposit will be made at four levels, rising in monetary value based on the skill level that a player wishes to enter the game play. For example, a \$20 "game account" deposit might be required for entrance as a novice player, a \$35 "game account" deposit for entrance as an experienced player, a \$50 "game account" deposit for entrance as an expert player. Gaining access to these levels is not limited to making these deposits, as a player can enter the game under novice status and, through successful game play, become an expert player.

Once an initial deposit has been made and a "game account" has been established, the player chooses a character that will serve as his tool to defeat his opponents throughout the levels of game play. The characters that are initially available to a user are very basic and their weaponry is extremely limited. In order for a player to progress his/her character's abilities, defense, energy, & special skills, he/she has three options:

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- I. A player can purchase additional lives, weapons, energy, & special skills via his/her "game account."
- II. A player can beat out his opponents and take over any additional characteristics that his opponent had gained
- III. A player can use the "gold" (money) from his defeated opponents' "game account" to purchase additional characteristics

In the preferred embodiment, a A player cannot use his/her "game account" to defeat levels of game play. The "game account" is held for purchase of additional characteristics for a player's character or for paying a successful opponent. A player can utilize purchased characteristics to help defeat opponents, and, therefore, levels – thus progressing in his game; however, there is no way to directly purchase progression through levels in the game.

A player is never required to add money to his/her "game account", after the initial deposit, if a player so chooses, since all of the advantages that are available for purchase can also be garnered from accurate and successful game play.

Revenue: E-Commerce Role Playing Platform creates revenue for the a company that runs and maintains the game 1 by taking a percentage of the initial deposit, purchase of additional characteristics, & any profits made through successful game play. For example, the licensing company will take a small percentage of Player A's initial "game account" deposit for operating costs and game maintenance (as well as profit). Likewise, if Player

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A chooses to purchase an upgrade from basic weaponry to medium level weaponry, the licensing company will take those fees from his/her "game account" automatically. And, lastly, if Player A defeats Player B and, consequently, the gold from Player B's "game account" is transferred into his/her "game account", the licensing company will take a small percentage of those winnings to contribute to its revenue.

~~Goal-winning the game:~~ Ultimately, the level of winning that a player wishes to achieve can vary substantially based on how far and for how long a player is willing to engage in game play.

A player has a number of options for removing him/herself from the game in a successful manner.

1. A player can reach his/her desired level and choose not to continue game play, at which point, the player can opt to cash out his/her "game account", with a small percentage of the "game account" funds returning to the licensing company.
2. A player can defeat opponents and complete a level, moving from, for instance, a novice player to an experienced player or from an experienced player to an advanced player. At this point, the player can choose to continue the game play in his/her newly acquired game level or he/she can opt to cash out his/her "game account", with a small percentage returning to the licensing company.

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3. A player can succeed in all levels of game play, defeating the highest ranked player at the expert level, at which point he/she can opt to become a "game master" and keep the funds in his/her "game account" intact. Or the player may defeat the highest ranked player at the expert level and choose to move onto the professional level that moves all of a player's "game account" funds into a "professional game account." This account is held in trust as a player maneuvers through the professional competition that will be completed in cycles of six months. Should a player be the ultimate winner of a six month cycle of professional level game play, he/she will receive all of the winnings from his/her opponents' "professional game accounts," and, also, the licensing company will be responsible to add a 25% contribution to those winnings as a bonus for being an ultimate professional player in a six month cycle. It is only possible for a player to win the six month professional cycle once every two cycles. Should a licensing company agree to continue with the process, they have the option to hold yearly competitions between the two winners of the six month cycles for a monetary sum/prize determined by the licensing company.

Alternative Embodiment

In an alternative embodiment, wWhen a player is offline, he/she has two options for his/her character. A character will have the ability to "camp" free of charge with minimal safety. But the possibility of the character being attacked by an opponent is in existence.

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For a minimal fee, a character can be camped on a daily basis with maximum protection and there is no possibility for attack by opponents, while offline. There will also be an "emergency camp" button for quick shut down of game play.

Advantages:

The E-Commerce Role Playing Platform will be applicable to any number of already designed fantasy games and any new fantasy games that will be developed specifically for the E-Commerce Role Playing Platform. It will appeal to all ages that wish to engage in continued interactive, progressive fantasy game play. The concept that fuels the E-Commerce Role Playing Platform is designed to compliment intelligent game playing, foster creative/imaginative virtual experience, & encourage interactive, non-aggressive competition between players from around the world.

CONCLUSION, RAMIFICATIONS, & SCOPE

The E-Commerce Role Playing Platform provides a forum of game playing that has yet to be broached by the video game or internet industries. Not only will this format of game play appeal to players of all ages, races, & sexes, it will single-handedly provide a forum for interactive, non-aggressive game play for members of the ~~World Wide Web~~ Internet community. The platform has the potential for wide-scale distribution to numerous companies with the ability to give the public new material in a highly competitive genre. This format can be used to propagate imagination, encourage intelligent spending habits

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via player maintenance of the "game account," & generate revenue for companies while simultaneously contributing to the positive connection of people around the world. The market for the E-Commerce Role Playing Platform is universal and can be translated into any number of languages for the entertainment and the development of non-aggressive competition in other countries.

Although the present invention has been described in considerable detail with reference to certain preferred versions thereof, other versions are possible. Therefore, the point and scope of the appended claims should not be limited to the description of the preferred versions contained herein.

As to a further discussion of the manner of usage and operation of the present invention, the same should be apparent from the above description. Accordingly, no further discussion relating to the manner of usage and operation will be provided.

With respect to the above description, it is to be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the invention, to include variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use, are deemed readily apparent and obvious to one skilled in the art, and all equivalent relationships to those illustrated in the drawings and described in the specification are intended to be encompassed by the present invention.

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Therefore, the foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention.

Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.

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In the Drawings:

The Examiner objected to the reference character 500 since it designates both the Internet and the World Wide Web. As the Examiner should be aware of, to most practitioners of the art, these terms are interchangeable. Changes have been made to the Specification to change World Wide Web to Internet.

The Figure presented is similar to figures used in numerous patent applications by both the Attorney of Record and others. Stick figures for Users are commonly used in these types of drawings with the internet being signified by a box. The system 1 uses the symbol for data as the system is loaded on a data device.

The Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a) saying that the game account and its contents must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s), but 35 USC 113 says that application will furnish drawing when drawings are necessary for the understanding of the subject matter to be patented the Applicant would argue that these are internal components of the system 1 which are best laid out in the Specification and where drawings are not necessary for the understanding of the subject matter.